

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
11 January 2001 (11.01.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/02368 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **C07D 217/04**, 401/14, A61K 31/4725, A61P 25/00
- (74) Agents: **MARKS, Andrew**; Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc., 130 Waverly Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-4242 et al. (US).
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US00/18492
- (22) International Filing Date: 6 July 2000 (06.07.2000)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/142,512 6 July 1999 (06.07.1999) US
- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- (71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*): **VERTEX PHARMACEUTICALS INCORPORATED** [US/US]; 130 Waverly Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-4242 (US).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (*for US only*): **LAUFFER, David** [US/US]; 254 Taylor Road, Stow, MA 01775 (US). **LED-FORD, Brian** [US/US]; 36 School Street, Hopkinton, MA 01748 (US). **MULLICAN, Michael** [US/US]; 110 Parker Road, Needham, MA 02194 (US).
- Published:**
— With international search report.
- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

(54) Title: N-HETEROCYCLIC DERIVATIVES WITH NEURONAL ACTIVITY

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to N-heterocyclic derivatives for treating or preventing neuronal damage associated with neurological diseases. The invention also provides compositions comprising the compounds of the present invention and methods of utilizing those compositions for treating or preventing neuronal damage.

WO 01/02368 A1

N-HETEROCYCLIC DERIVATIVES WITH NEURONAL ACTIVITY

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates N-heterocyclic derivatives for treating or preventing neuronal damage associated with neurological diseases. The invention also provides compositions comprising the compounds of the present invention and methods of utilizing those compositions for treating or preventing neuronal damage.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Neurological diseases are associated with the death of or injury to neuronal cells. Typical treatment of neurological diseases involves drugs capable of inhibiting neuronal cell death. A more recent approach involves the promotion of nerve regeneration by promoting neuronal growth.

Neuronal growth, which is critical for the survival of neurons, is stimulated *in vitro* by nerve growth factors (NGF). For example, Glial Cell Line-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (GDNF) demonstrates neurotrophic activity both, *in vivo* and *in vitro*, and is currently being investigated for the treatment of Parkinson's disease. Insulin and insulin-like growth factors have been shown to stimulate growth of neurites in rat pheochromocytoma PC12 cells and in cultured sympathetic and sensory neurons [Recio-Pinto et al., J. Neurosci., 6, pp. 1211-1219 (1986)]. Insulin and insulin-like growth factors also stimulate the regeneration of injured

motor nerves *in vivo* and *in vitro* [Near et al.,
Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci., pp. 89, 11716-11720 (1992);
and Edbladh et al., Brain Res., 641, pp. 76-82
(1994)]. Similarly, fibroblast growth factor (FGF)
5 stimulates neural proliferation [D. Gospodarowicz et
al., Cell Differ., 19, p. 1 (1986)] and growth [M.
A. Walter et al., Lymphokine Cytokine Res., 12, p.
135 (1993)].

There are, however, several disadvantages
10 associated with the use of nerve growth factors for
treating neurological diseases. They do not readily
cross the blood-brain barrier. They are unstable in
plasma and they have poor drug delivery properties.

Recently, small molecules have been shown to
15 stimulate neurite outgrowth *in vivo*. In individuals
suffering from a neurological disease, this
stimulation of neuronal growth protects neurons from
further degeneration, and accelerates the
regeneration of nerve cells. For example, estrogen
20 has been shown to promote the growth of axons and
dendrites, which are neurites sent out by nerve
cells to communicate with each other in a developing
or injured adult brain [(C. Dominique Toran-Allerand
et al., J. Steroid Biochem. Mol. Biol., 56, pp. 169-
25 78 (1996); and B. S. McEwen et al., Brain Res. Dev.
Brain. Res., 87, pp. 91-95 (1995)]. The progress of
Alzheimer's disease is slowed in women who take
estrogen. Estrogen is hypothesized to complement NGF
and other neurotrophins and thereby help neurons
30 differentiate and survive.

Other target sites for the treatment of neurodegenerative disease are the immunophilin class of proteins. Immunophilins are a family of soluble proteins that mediate the actions of

5 immunosuppressant drugs such as cyclosporin A, FK506 and rapamycin. Of particular interest is the 12 kDa immunophilin, FK-506 binding protein (FKBP12). FKBP12 binds FK-506 and rapamycin, leading to an inhibition of T-cell activation and proliferation.

10 Interestingly, the mechanism of action of FK-506 and rapamycin are different. For a review, see, S. H. Solomon et al., Nature Med., 1, pp. 32-37 (1995). It has been reported that compounds with an affinity for FKBP12 that inhibit that protein's rotomase

15 activity possess nerve growth stimulatory activity. [Lyons et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, 91, pp. 3191-3195 (1994)]. Many of these such compounds also have immunosuppressive activity.

FK506 (Tacrolimus) has been demonstrated to act

20 synergistically with NGF in stimulating neurite outgrowth in PC12 cells as well as sensory ganglia [Lyons et al. (1994)]. This compound has also been shown to be neuroprotective in focal cerebral ischemia [J. Sharkey and S. P. Butcher, Nature, 371,

25 pp. 336-339 (1994)] and to increase the rate of axonal regeneration in injured sciatic nerve [B. Gold et al., J. Neurosci., 15, pp. 7509-16 (1995)].

The use of immunosuppressive compounds, however, has drawbacks in that prolonged treatment

30 with these compounds can cause nephrotoxicity [Kopp et al., J. Am. Soc. Nephrol., 1, p. 162 (1991)],

neurological deficits [P.C. DeGroen et al., N. Eng. J. Med., 317, p. 861 (1987)] and vascular hypertension [Kahan et al., N. Eng. J. Med., 321, p. 1725 (1989)].

5 More recently, sub-classes of FKBP binding compounds which inhibit rotomase activity, but which purportedly lack immunosuppressive function have been disclosed for use in stimulating nerve growth [see, United States patent 5,614,547; WO 96/40633; 10 WO 96/40140; WO 97/16190; J. P. Steiner et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA , 94, pp. 2019-23 (1997); and G. S. Hamilton et al., Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett., 7, pp. 1785-90 (1997)].

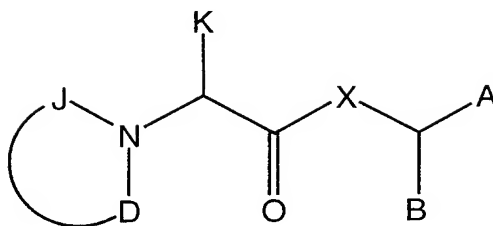
 Stimulation of neural axons in nerve cells by 15 piperidine derivatives is described in WO 96/41609. Clinical use of the piperidine and pyrrolidine derivatives known so far for stimulating axonal growth has not been promising, as the compounds are unstable in plasma and do not pass the blood-brain 20 barrier in adequate amounts.

 Though a wide variety of neurological degenerative diseases may be treated by promoting repair of neuronal damage, there are relatively few agents known to possess these properties. Thus, 25 there remains a need for new compounds and compositions that have the ability to either prevent or treat neuronal damage associated with neuropathologic diseases.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

30 The present invention provides compounds having formula (I):

-5-



(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable derivatives thereof,
wherein:

5 X is O, S, $C(R^1)_2$ or NR^1 ;

A, B and R^1 are independently E, (C_1-C_{10}) -
straight or branched alkyl, (C_2-C_{10}) -straight or
branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C_5-C_7) -cycloalkyl or
cycloalkenyl; wherein 1 or 2 hydrogen atoms in said
10 alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl are optionally and
independently replaced with E, (C_5-C_7) -cycloalkyl or
cycloalkenyl; and wherein 1 to 2 methylene $(-CH_2-)$
groups in said alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl groups are
optionally and independently replaced by $-O-$, $-S-$,
15 $-S(O)-$, $-S(O)_2-$, $=N-$, $-N=$ or $-N(R^3)-$;

or B and R^1 are independently hydrogen;

wherein R^3 is selected from hydrogen, (C_1-C_4) -
straight or branched alkyl, (C_3-C_4) -straight or
branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C_1-C_4) bridging
20 alkyl, wherein said bridge is formed between the
nitrogen atom to which said R^3 is bound and any
carbon atom of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl to
form a ring, and wherein said ring is optionally
benzofused;

25 wherein E is a saturated, partially saturated
or unsaturated, or aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic
ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring

-6-

atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are
5 optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO₃H, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl, O-[(C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl],
10 O-[(C₃-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl], (CH₂)_n-N(R⁴)(R⁵), (CH₂)_n-NH(R⁴)-(CH₂)_n-Z, (CH₂)_n-N(R⁴-(CH₂)_n-Z)(R⁵-(CH₂)_n-Z), (CH₂)_n-Z, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, (CH₂)_n-O-Z, S-(CH₂)_n-Z, CH=CH-Z, 1,2-methylenedioxy, C(O)OH, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl],
15 C(O)O-(CH₂)_n-Z or C(O)-N(R⁴)(R⁵);

wherein each of R⁴ and R⁵ are independently hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₅)-straight or branched alkenyl, or wherein R⁴ and R⁵, when bound to the same nitrogen atom, are taken
20 together with the nitrogen atom to form a 5 or 6 membered ring, wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from N, O or S; wherein said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl groups in R₄ and R₅ are optionally
25 substituted with Z.

each n is independently 0 to 4;

each Z is independently selected from a saturated, partially saturated or unsaturated, monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each
30 ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than

-7-

4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in Z are optionally and independently replaced with halo, hydroxy, nitro, cyano, C(O)OH, (C₁-C₃)-straight or
5 branched alkyl, O-(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], amino, NH[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], or N-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl]₂;

K is selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)-straight or
10 branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, wherein 1 to 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl is optionally and independently replaced with E;

wherein K is optionally substituted with up to
15 3 substituents selected from halogen, OH, O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, NO₂, CO₂H, C(O)-O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, C(O)NR⁴R⁵, NR⁴R⁵ and (CH₂)_n-Z;

J and D are taken together with the nitrogen atom, form a 5-7 membered saturated or unsaturated
20 heterocyclic ring, wherein up to 3 ring atoms are optionally substituted with a heteroatom selected from O, N, S and S(O₂), wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in said heterocyclic ring are optionally and independently replaced with (C₁-C₆)-straight or
25 branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, oxo, hydroxyl or Z; and wherein any -CH₂- group said heterocyclic ring is optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O₂)-, or -N(R³)-; and wherein said heterocyclic ring is
30 optionally fused with E;

-8-

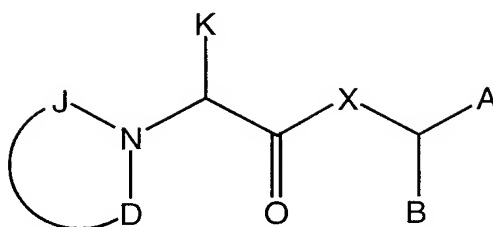
wherein R⁶ is hydrogen, E, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl; or wherein R⁶ and D are taken together with the atoms to which they are bound to form a 5 to 7 membered ring system wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from O, S, N, NH, SO, or SO₂; and wherein said ring is optionally benzofused.

In another embodiment, the invention provides pharmaceutical compositions comprising the compounds of formula (I). These compositions may be utilized in methods treating various neurological diseases which are influenced by neuronal regeneration and axon growth or for stimulating neuronal regeneration in an ex vivo nerve cell. Examples of such diseases include peripheral nerve destruction due to physical injury or diseases such as diabetes; physical injuries to the central nervous system (e.g., brain or spinal cord); stroke; neurological disturbances due to nerve degeneration, such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides compounds having formula (I):

-9-



(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable derivatives thereof,
wherein:

5 X is O, S, C(R¹)₂ or NR¹;

A, B and R¹ are independently E, (C₁-C₁₀)-
straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₁₀)-straight or
branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C₅-C₇)-cycloalkyl or
cycloalkenyl; wherein 1 or 2 hydrogen atoms in said
10 alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl are optionally and
independently replaced with E, (C₅-C₇)-cycloalkyl or
cycloalkenyl; and wherein 1 to 2 methylene (-CH₂-)
groups in said alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl groups are
optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-,
15 -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, =N-, -N= or -N(R³)-;

or B and R¹ are independently hydrogen;

wherein R³ is selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₄)-
straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₄)-straight or
branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C₁-C₄) bridging
20 alkyl, wherein said bridge is formed between the
nitrogen atom to which said R³ is bound and any
carbon atom of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl to
form a ring, and wherein said ring is optionally
benzofused;

25 wherein E is a saturated, partially saturated
or unsaturated, or aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic
ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring

atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are
5 optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO₃H, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl, O-[(C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl],
10 O-[(C₃-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl], (CH₂)_n-N(R⁴)(R⁵), (CH₂)_n-NH(R⁴)-(CH₂)_n-Z, (CH₂)_n-N(R⁴)-(CH₂)_n-Z(R⁵-(CH₂)_n-Z), (CH₂)_n-Z, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, (CH₂)_n-O-Z, S-(CH₂)_n-Z, CH=CH-Z, 1,2-methylenedioxy, C(O)OH, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl],
15 C(O)O-(CH₂)_n-Z or C(O)-N(R⁴)(R⁵);

wherein each of R⁴ and R⁵ are independently hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₅)-straight or branched alkenyl, or wherein R⁴ and R⁵, when bound to the same nitrogen atom, are taken
20 together with the nitrogen atom to form a 5 or 6 membered ring, wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from N, O or S; wherein said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl groups in R₄ and R₅ are optionally
25 substituted with Z.

each n is independently 0 to 4;

each Z is independently selected from a saturated, partially saturated or unsaturated, monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each
30 ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than

-11-

4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in Z are optionally and independently replaced with halo, hydroxy, nitro, cyano, C(O)OH, (C₁-C₃)-straight or
5 branched alkyl, O-(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], amino, NH[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], or N-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl]₂;

K is selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)-straight or
10 branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, wherein 1 to 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl is optionally and independently replaced with E;

wherein K is optionally substituted with up to
15 3 substituents selected from halogen, OH, O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, NO₂, CO₂H, C(O)-O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, C(O)NR⁴R⁵, NR⁴R⁵ and (CH₂)_n-Z;

J and D are taken together with the nitrogen atom, form a 5-7 membered saturated or unsaturated
20 heterocyclic ring, wherein up to 3 ring atoms are optionally substituted with a heteroatom selected from O, N, S and S(O₂), wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in said heterocyclic ring are optionally and independently replaced with (C₁-C₆)-straight or
25 branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, oxo, hydroxyl or Z; and wherein any -CH₂-group said heterocyclic ring is optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O₂)-, or -N(R³)-; and wherein said heterocyclic ring is
30 optionally fused with E;

-12-

wherein R⁶ is hydrogen, E, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl; or wherein R⁶ and D are taken together with the atoms to which they are bound to
5 form a 5 to 7 membered ring system wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from O, S, N, NH, SO, or SO₂; and wherein said ring is optionally benzofused.

According to a preferred embodiment, each
10 of A and B in formula (I) is (C₁-C₁₀) straight or branched alkyl, wherein 1-2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl are optionally substituted with E.

In another preferred embodiment, B is
hydrogen.

15 According to a more preferred embodiment, each of A and B in formula (I) is -CH₂-CH₂-E or -CH₂-CH₂-CH₂-E.

According to another preferred embodiment, D in formula (I) is (C₁-C₇) straight or branched
20 alkyl, E or [(C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl]-E.

According to another preferred embodiment, D is
an aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic ring system,
wherein each ring comprises 5-7 ring atoms
25 independently selected from C, N, O or S, and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S.

According to another preferred embodiment, D is substituted or unsubstituted phenyl or C₁-C₇
30 straight or branched alkyl group.

According to another preferred embodiment, K and D, taken together with the nitrogen atom, form a 5-7 membered heterocyclic ring, optionally containing up to 3 additional heteroatoms selected from O, N, S and S(O₂), wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in said heterocyclic ring are optionally and independently replaced with (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, oxo, hydroxyl or Z; and wherein any -CH₂- group said heterocyclic ring is optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O₂)-, or -N(R³)-; and wherein said heterocyclic ring is optionally fused with E;

According to a more preferred embodiment, K and D, taken together with the nitrogen atom, form a 5-7 membered heterocyclic ring, optionally containing up to 3 additional heteroatoms selected from O, N, S and S(O₂), wherein said heterocyclic ring is fused with E.

According to another preferred embodiment, E in formula (I) is a monocyclic or bicyclic aromatic ring system, wherein said ring comprises 5-7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S, and wherein 1 to 4 ring atoms are independently selected from N, O or S.

According to a more preferred embodiments of E include phenyl, naphthyl, indenyl, azulenyl, fluorenyl, anthracenyl, furyl, thienyl, pyridyl, pyrrolyl, oxazolyl, thiazolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, pyrazolinyl, pyrazolidinyl, isothiazolyl, 1,3,4-thiadiazolyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl, 1,3,5-

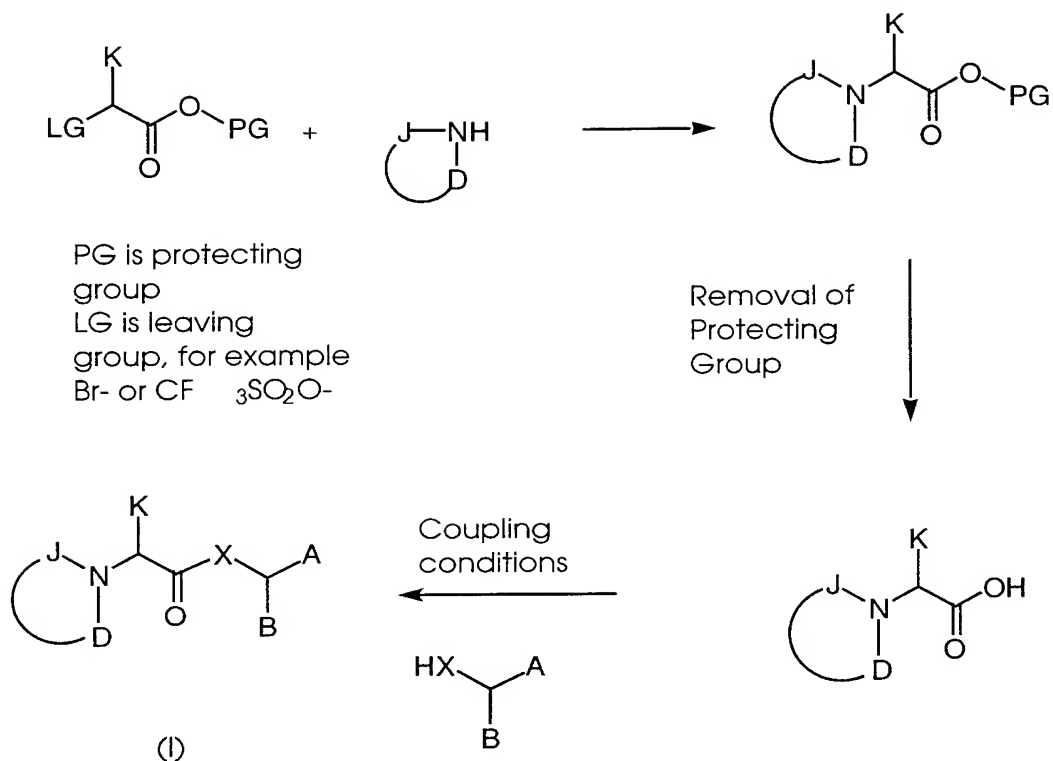
triazinyl, 1,3,5-trithianyl, benzo[b]furanyl,
benzo[b]thiophenyl, purinyl, cinnolinyl,
phthalazinyl, isoxazolyl, triazolyl, oxadiazolyl,
pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl, indolinyl, indolizinyl,
5 isoindolyl, benzimidazolyl, benzothiophenyl,
quinolinyl, isoquinolinyl, quinazolinyl,
quinoxalinyl, 1,8-naphthyridinyl, pteridinyl,
carbazolyl, acridinyl, phnazinyl, phenothiazinyl,
phenoxazinyl and benzothiazolyl, wherein E is
10 optionally substituted as described above.

More preferred embodiments of E include
phenyl, furyl, thienyl, pyridyl, pyrrolyl, oxazolyl,
thiazolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, isoxazolyl,
triazolyl, oxadiazolyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl,
15 indolyl, isoindolyl, benzimidazolyl,
benzothiophenyl, quinolinyl, isoquinolinyl, and
benzothiazolyl, wherein E is optionally substituted
as described above.

The compounds of formula (I) may be
20 stereoisomers, geometric isomers or stable
tautomers. The invention envisions all possible
isomers, such as E and Z isomers, S and R
enantiomers, diastereoisomers, racemates, and
mixtures of those. It is preferred that the
25 substituent in the 2 position have the S
configuration.

The compounds of the present invention may
be readily prepared using known synthetic methods.
For example, compounds of formula (I) may be
30 prepared as shown below in Scheme I:

-15-

Scheme I

wherein D, J, K, X, ~~x~~, A and B are as defined in formula (I).

5 In addition to the above synthetic Schemes, one of skill in the art would be well aware of other synthetic routes to the compounds of the present invention.

 According to another embodiment, this
 10 invention provides compositions comprising a compound of formula (I) and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

 Pharmaceutically acceptable carriers that may be used in these pharmaceutical compositions
 15 include, but are not limited to, ion exchangers, alumina, aluminum stearate, lecithin, serum

proteins, such as human serum albumin, buffer substances such as phosphates, glycine, sorbic acid, potassium sorbate, partial glyceride mixtures of saturated vegetable fatty acids, water, salts or electrolytes, such as protamine sulfate, disodium hydrogen phosphate, potassium hydrogen phosphate, sodium chloride, zinc salts, colloidal silica, magnesium trisilicate, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, cellulose-based substances, polyethylene glycol, sodium carboxy methylcellulose, polyacrylates, waxes, polyethylene-polyoxypropylene-block polymers, polyethylene glycol and wool fat.

In another embodiment, the pharmaceutical composition of the present invention is comprised of a compound of formula (I), a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and a neurotrophic factor.

The term "neurotrophic factor," as used herein, refers to compounds which are capable of stimulating growth or proliferation of nervous tissue. Numerous neurotrophic factors have been identified in the art and any of those factors may be utilized in the compositions of this invention. These neurotrophic factors include, but are not limited to, nerve growth factor (NGF), insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1) and its active truncated derivatives such as gIGF-1 and Des(1-3)IGF-I, acidic and basic fibroblast growth factor (aFGF and bFGF, respectively), platelet-derived growth factors (PDGF), brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), ciliary neurotrophic factors (CNTF), glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF),

neurotrophin-3 (NT-3) and neurotrophin 4/5 (NT-4/5).
The most preferred neurotrophic factor in the
compositions of this invention is NGF.

As used herein, the described compounds
5 used in the pharmaceutical compositions and methods
of this invention, are defined to include
pharmaceutically acceptable derivatives thereof. A
"pharmaceutically acceptable derivative" denotes any
pharmaceutically acceptable salt, ester, or salt of
10 such ester, of a compound of this invention or any
other compound which, upon administration to a
patient, is capable of providing (directly or
indirectly) a compound of this invention, or a
metabolite or residue thereof, characterized by the
15 ability to promote repair or prevent damage of
neurons from disease or physical trauma.

If pharmaceutically acceptable salts of
the described compounds are used, those salts are
preferably derived from inorganic or organic acids
20 and bases. Included among such acid salts are the
following: acetate, adipate, alginate, aspartate,
benzoate, benzenesulfonate, bisulfate, butyrate,
citrate, camphorate, camphorsulfonate,
cyclopentanepropionate, digluconate, dodecylsulfate,
25 ethanesulfonate, fumarate, glucoheptanoate,
glycerophosphate, hemisulfate, heptanoate,
hexanoate, hydrochloride, hydrobromide, hydroiodide,
2-hydroxyethanesulfonate, lactate, maleate,
methanesulfonate, 2-naphthalenesulfonate,
30 nicotinate, oxalate, pamoate, pectinate, persulfate,
3-phenyl-propionate, picrate, pivalate, propionate,

succinate, tartrate, thiocyanate, tosylate and undecanoate. Base salts include ammonium salts, alkali metal salts, such as sodium and potassium salts, alkaline earth metal salts, such as calcium and magnesium salts, salts with organic bases, such as dicyclohexylamine salts, N-methyl-D-glucamine, and salts with amino acids such as arginine, lysine, and so forth. Also, the basic nitrogen-containing groups can be quaternized with such agents as lower alkyl halides, such as methyl, ethyl, propyl, and butyl chloride, bromides and iodides; dialkyl sulfates, such as dimethyl, diethyl, dibutyl and diamyl sulfates, long chain halides such as decyl, lauryl, myristyl and stearyl chlorides, bromides and iodides, aralkyl halides, such as benzyl and phenethyl bromides and others. Water or oil-soluble or dispersible products are thereby obtained.

The described compounds utilized in the compositions and methods of this invention may also be modified by appending appropriate functionalities to enhance selective biological properties. Such modifications are known in the art and include those which increase biological penetration into a given biological system (e.g., blood, lymphatic system, central nervous system), increase oral availability, increase solubility to allow administration by injection, alter metabolism and alter rate of excretion.

The compositions of the present invention may be administered orally, parenterally, by inhalation spray, topically, rectally, nasally,

buccally, vaginally or via an implanted reservoir. The term "parenteral" as used herein includes subcutaneous, intravenous, intramuscular, intra-articular, intra-synovial, intrasternal, intrathecal, intrahepatic, intralesional and intracranial injection or infusion techniques. Preferably, the compositions are administered orally, intraperitoneally or intravenously.

Sterile injectable forms of the compositions of this invention may be aqueous or oleaginous suspension. These suspensions may be formulated according to techniques known in the art using suitable dispersing or wetting agents and suspending agents. The sterile injectable preparation may also be a sterile injectable solution or suspension in a non-toxic parenterally-acceptable diluent or solvent, for example as a solution in 1,3-butanediol. Among the acceptable vehicles and solvents that may be employed are water, Ringer's solution and isotonic sodium chloride solution. In addition, sterile, fixed oils are conventionally employed as a solvent or suspending medium. For this purpose, any bland fixed oil may be employed including synthetic mono- or di-glycerides. Fatty acids, such as oleic acid and its glyceride derivatives are useful in the preparation of injectables, as are natural pharmaceutically-acceptable oils, such as olive oil or castor oil, especially in their polyoxyethylated versions. These oil solutions or suspensions may

also contain a long-chain alcohol diluent or dispersant, such as Ph. Hely or similar alcohol.

The pharmaceutical compositions of this invention may be orally administered in any orally acceptable dosage form including, but not limited to, capsules, tablets, aqueous suspensions or solutions. In the case of tablets for oral use, carriers which are commonly used include lactose and corn starch. Lubricating agents, such as magnesium stearate, are also typically added. For oral administration in a capsule form, useful diluents include lactose and dried corn starch. When aqueous suspensions are required for oral use, the active ingredient is combined with emulsifying and suspending agents. If desired, certain sweetening, flavoring or coloring agents may also be added.

Alternatively, the pharmaceutical compositions of this invention may be administered in the form of suppositories for rectal administration. These can be prepared by mixing the agent with a suitable non-irritating excipient which is solid at room temperature but liquid at rectal temperature and therefore will melt in the rectum to release the drug. Such materials include cocoa butter, beeswax and polyethylene glycols.

The pharmaceutical compositions of this invention may also be administered topically, especially when the target of treatment includes areas or organs readily accessible by topical application, including diseases of the eye, the skin, or the lower intestinal tract. Suitable

topical formulations are readily prepared for each of these areas or organs.

Topical application for the lower intestinal tract can be effected in a rectal
5 suppository formulation (see above) or in a suitable enema formulation. Topically-transdermal patches may also be used.

For topical applications, the pharmaceutical compositions may be formulated in a
10 suitable ointment containing the active component suspended or dissolved in one or more carriers. Carriers for topical administration of the compounds of this invention include, but are not limited to, mineral oil, liquid petrolatum, white petrolatum,
15 propylene glycol, polyoxyethylene, polyoxypropylene compound, emulsifying wax and water. Alternatively, the pharmaceutical compositions can be formulated in a suitable lotion or cream containing the active components suspended or dissolved in one or more
20 pharmaceutically acceptable carriers. Suitable carriers include, but are not limited to, mineral oil, sorbitan monostearate, polysorbate 60, cetyl esters wax, cetearyl alcohol, 2-octyldodecanol, benzyl alcohol and water.

25 For ophthalmic use, the pharmaceutical compositions may be formulated as micronized suspensions in isotonic, pH adjusted sterile saline, or, preferably, as solutions in isotonic, pH adjusted sterile saline, either with or without a
30 preservative such as benzylalkonium chloride. Alternatively, for ophthalmic uses, the

pharmaceutical compositions may be formulated in an ointment such as petrolatum.

The pharmaceutical compositions of this invention may also be administered by nasal aerosol
5 or inhalation. Such compositions are prepared according to techniques well-known in the art of pharmaceutical formulation and may be prepared as solutions in saline, employing benzyl alcohol or other suitable preservatives, absorption promoters
10 to enhance bioavailability, fluorocarbons, and/or other conventional solubilizing or dispersing agents.

The amount of both a described compound and the optional neurotrophic factor that may be
15 combined with the carrier materials to produce a single dosage form will vary depending upon the host treated and the particular mode of administration. Preferably, the compositions should be formulated so that a dosage of between 0.01 - 100 mg/kg body
20 weight/day of the described compound can be administered. If a neurotrophic factor is present in the composition, then a dosage of between 0.01 µg - 100 mg/kg body weight/day of the neurotrophic factor can be administered to a patient receiving
25 these compositions.

It should also be understood that a specific dosage and treatment regimen for any particular patient will depend upon a variety of factors, including the activity of the specific
30 compound employed, the age, body weight, general health, sex, diet, time of administration, rate of

-23-

excretion, drug combination, and the judgment of the treating physician and the severity of the particular disease being treated. The amount of active ingredients will also depend upon the
5 particular described compound and neurotrophic factor in the composition.

According to another embodiment, this invention provides methods for promoting repair or preventing neuronal damage or neurodegeneration *in vivo* or in an *ex vivo* nerve cell. Such methods
10 comprise the step of treating nerve cells with any of the compounds described above. Preferably, this method promotes repair or prevents neuronal damage in a patient, and the compound is formulated into a
15 composition additionally comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier. The amount of the compound utilized in these methods is between about 0.01 and 100 mg/kg body weight/day.

According to an alternate embodiment, the
20 method of promoting repair or preventing neuronal damage comprises the additional step of treating nerve cells with a neurotrophic factor, such as those contained in the pharmaceutical compositions of this invention. This embodiment includes
25 administering the compound and the neurotrophic agent in a single dosage form or in separate, multiple dosage forms. If separate dosage forms are utilized, they may be administered concurrently, consecutively or within less than about 5 hours of
30 one another.

Preferably, the methods of this invention are used to stimulate axonal growth in nerve cells. The compounds are, therefore, suitable for treating or preventing neuronal damage caused by a wide variety of diseases or physical traumas. These include, but are not limited to, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, ALS, Huntington's disease, Tourette's syndrome, stroke and ischemia associated with stroke, neural paropathy, other neural degenerative diseases, motor neuron diseases, sciatic crush, spinal cord injuries and facial nerve crush.

In a particularly preferred embodiment of the invention, the method is used to treat a patient suffering from trigeminal neuralgia, glossopharyngeal neuralgia, Bell's Palsy, myasthenia gravis, muscular dystrophy, muscle injury, progressive muscular atrophy, progressive bulbar inherited muscular atrophy, herniated, ruptured, or prolapsed intervertebrae disk syndrome's, cervical spondylosis, plexus disorders, thoracic outlet destruction syndromes, peripheral neuropathies, such as those caused by lead, dapsone, ticks, or porphyria, other peripheral myelin disorders, Alzheimer's disease, Guillain-Barre syndrome, Parkinson's disease and other Parkinsonian disorders, ALS, Tourette's syndrome, multiple sclerosis, other central myelin disorders, stroke and ischemia associated with stroke, neural paropathy, other neural degenerative diseases, motor neuron diseases, sciatic crush, neuropathy associated with diabetes, spinal cord

-25-

injuries, facial nerve crush and other trauma, chemotherapy- and other medication-induced neuropathies, and Huntington's disease.

More preferably, the compositions of the present invention are used for treating Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, stroke, neuralgias, muscular atrophies, and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

For use of the compounds according to the invention as medications, they are administered in the form of a pharmaceutical preparation containing not only the active ingredient but also carriers, auxiliary substances, and/or additives suitable for enteric or parenteral administration. Administration can be oral or sublingual as a solid in the form of capsules or tablets, as a liquid in the form of solutions, suspensions, elixirs, aerosols or emulsions, or rectal in the form of suppositories, or in the form of solutions for injection which can be given subcutaneously, intramuscularly, or intravenously, or which can be given topically or intrathecally. Auxiliary substances for the desired medicinal formulation include the inert organic and inorganic carriers known to those skilled in the art, such as water, gelatin, gum arabic, lactose, starches, magnesium stearate, talc, vegetable oils, polyalkylene glycols, etc. The medicinal formulations may also contain preservatives, stabilizers, wetting agents, emulsifiers, or salts to change the osmotic pressure or as buffers.

Solutions or suspensions for injection are

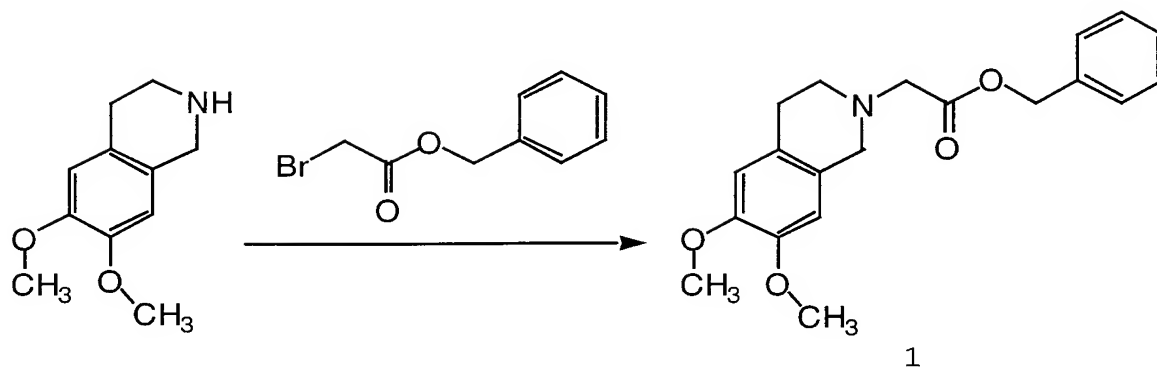
suitable for parenteral administration, and especially aqueous solutions of the active compounds in polyhydroxy-ethoxylated castor oil.

Surface-active auxiliary substances such
5 as
salts of gallic acid, animal or vegetable phospholipids, or mixtures of them, and liposomes or their components, can be used as carrier systems.

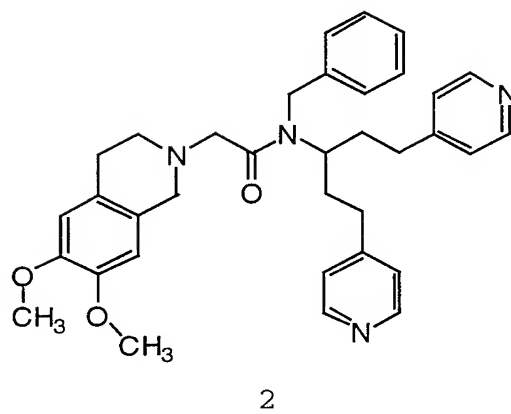
The neurotrophic effect of the compounds
10 of
formula (I) of the present invention and their physiologically acceptable salts can be determined by the methods of W. E. Lyons et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, Vol. 91, pp. 3191-3195 (1994) and W.
15 E. Lyons et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, Vol. 91, pages 3191-3195 (1994).

In order that this invention may be more fully understood, the following examples are set forth. These examples are for the purpose of
20 illustration only and are not to be construed as limiting the scope of the invention in any way.

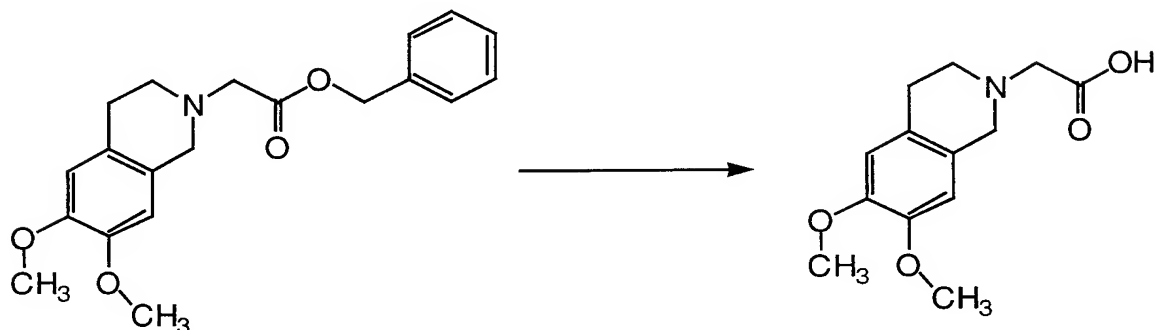
-27-

Example 1

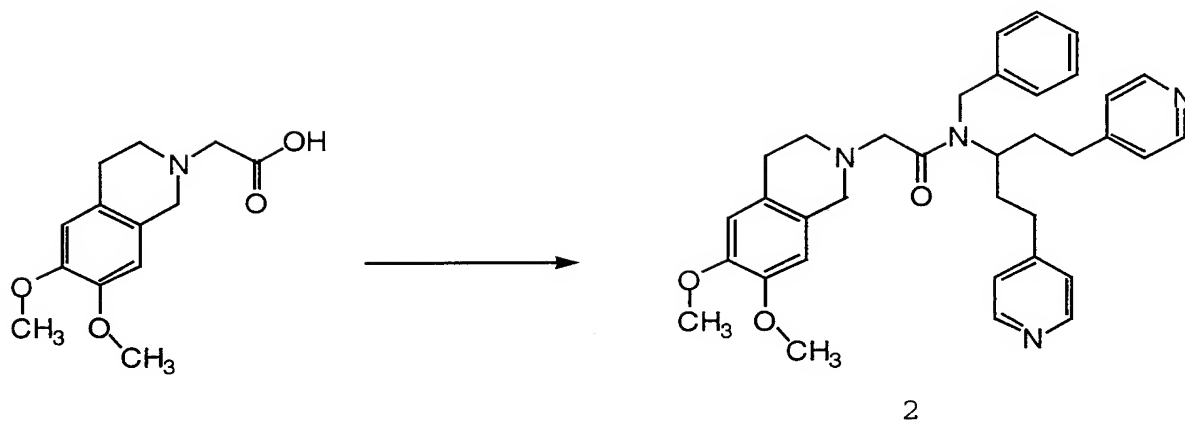
Benzyl bromoacetate (3.8 ml, 24 mmol) was added
5 to a mixture of 6,7-dimethoxy-1,2,3,4-
tetrahydroisoquinoline hydrochloride (5g, 21.8
mmol) and potassium carbonate (8.29g, 60 mmol) in 50
ml of dimethyl formamide. The mixture was stirred
at room temperature for 16 hours. The reaction was
10 diluted with ethyl acetate and washed with 10%
sodium bicarbonate, water, and brine. The organic
layer was dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and
evaporated in vacuo to afford a golden brown oil.
The crude oil was purified by flash chromatography
15 (SiO₂) eluting with 7:3 dichloromethane/ethyl
acetate to afford 3.33g (44%) of the title compound
as a clear yellow viscous oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) ? 7.4-
7.31 (5H, m), 6.57 (1H, s), 6.47 (1H, s), 5.18 (2H,
s), 3.86 (3H, s), 3.84 (3H, s), 3.73 (2H, s), 3.46
20 (2H, s), 2.88 (4H, m).

Example 2

Step A: Synthesis of (6,7-Dimethoxy-3,4-dihydro-1H-
5 isoquinolin-2-yl)-acetic acid.



10 10% Palladium/carbon (200mg) was added to a solution of 1 (920mg) in 20 ml of ethanol. The solution was stirred at room temperature under an atmosphere of hydrogen for 5 hours. The reaction was filtered through Celite and the filtrate evaporated in vacuo to afford 680mg of a light yellow solid of the desired product that was used without purification.

Step B:

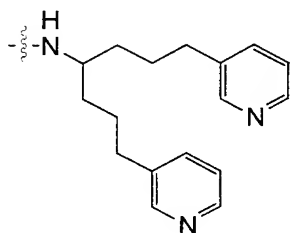
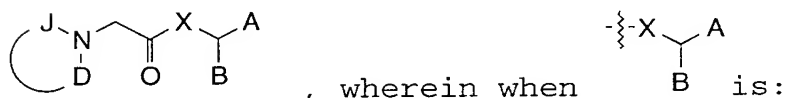
The product of Step A (200mg, 0.79) was
5 suspended in 15 ml of dichloromethane and 0.5 ml
(2.61 mmol) of diisopropylethylamine and cooled to 5
C with an ice bath.
Trimethylacetyl chloride (100 μ l, 0.79 mmol) was
added to the heterogeneous mixture dropwise. After
10 2 hours, compound x (235mg, 0.711mmol) in 5 ml of
dichloromethane was added to the homogeneous
solution dropwise and the reaction was slowly warmed
to room temperature overnight. The reaction was
diluted with 100ml of dichloromethane and washed
15 with 1N NaOH, water, and brine. The organic layer
was dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and
evaporated in vacuo to afford a yellow oil that was
purified by flash chromatography eluting with 97:3
(dichloromethane/methanol) to afford 237 mg of 2 as
20 a light yellow solid: HPLC (C18 column, gradient 0.1
% TFA/1% CH₃CN/98.9% H₂O to 0.1 % TFA/ CH₃CN over 28
min at a flow rate of 1 mL/min) RT = 8.093 mins.
(>99%); MS 565.3 (M+H); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ : 8.48 (2H,
d), 8.43 (2H, d), 7.53-7.29 (5H, m), 6.98 (2H, d),

6.75 (2H, d), 6.66 (0.5H, s), 6.63 (0.5H, s), 6.58 (0.5H, s), 6.51 (0.5H, s), 4.78 (1H, s), 4.67 (1H, s), 4.24 (1H, m), 3.91 (3H, s), 3.89 (1.5H, s), 3.83 (1.5H, s), 3.73 (1H, s), 3.58 (1H, s), 3.47 (1H, s),
 5 3.33 (1H, s), 2.91 (2H, m), 2.84 (1H, m), 2.79 (1H, m), 2.58 (2H, t), 2.57-2.43 (2H, m), 2.18-1.78 (4H, m).

Example 3

Compounds 3-50

10 Compounds 3-50 have the general formula:

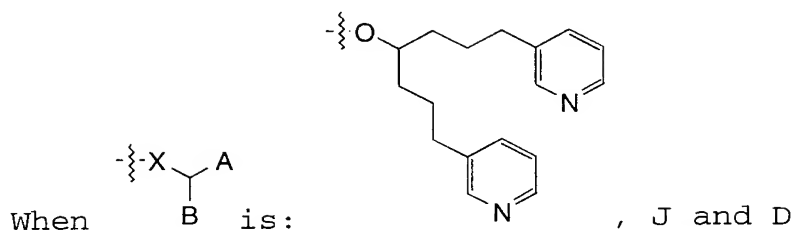


, J and D are taken together to form:

- pyrrolidinyl - compound 3
- piperidinyl - compound 4
- 15 azacycloheptyl - compound 5
- isoindolinyl - compound 6
- 1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 7
- 6,7-dimethoxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 8
- 20 octahydroisoindolyl - compound 9
- decahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 10
- 2-pyrrolidinonyl - compound 11
- 2-piperidonyl - compound 12
- 2-azacycloheptanonyl - compound 13

-31-

3,4-dihydro-2(1 H)-quinolinonyl - compound 14.



are taken together to form:

pyrrolidinyl - compound 15

5 piperidinyl - compound 16

azacycloheptyl - compound 17

isoindolinyl - compound 18

1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 19

6,7-dimethoxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl -

10 compound 20

octahydroisoindolyl - compound 21

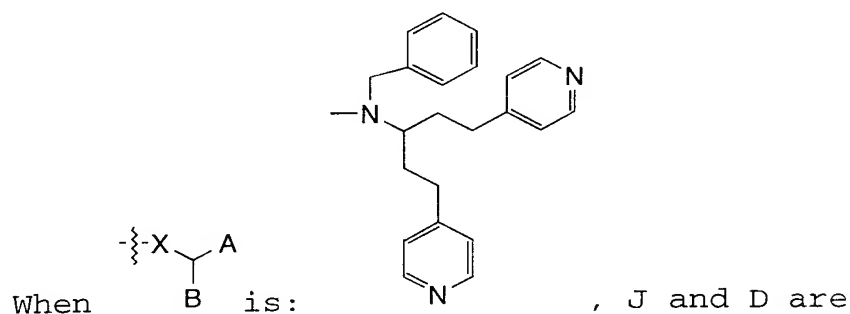
decahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 22

2-pyrrolidinonyl - compound 23

2-piperidonyl - compound 24

15 2-azacycloheptanonyl - compound 25

3,4-dihydro-2(1 H)-quinolinonyl - compound 26



taken together to form:

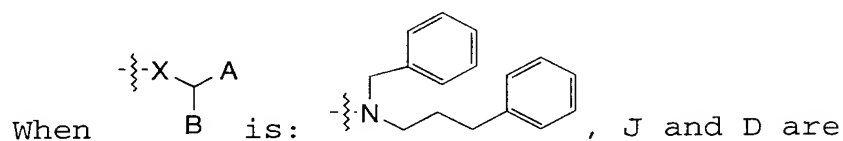
pyrrolidinyl - compound 27

20 piperidinyl - compound 28

azacycloheptyl - compound 29

-32-

- isoindolinyl - compound 30
 1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 31
 6,7-dimethoxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl -
 compound 32
 5 octahydroisoindolyl - compound 33
 decahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 34
 2-pyrrolidinonyl - compound 35
 2-piperidonyl - compound 36
 2-azacycloheptanonyl - compound 37
 10 3,4-dihydro-2(1 H)-quinolinonyl - compound 38



- taken together to form:
 pyrrolidinyl - compound 39
 piperidinyl - compound 40
 15 azacycloheptyl - compound 41
 isoindolinyl - compound 42
 1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 43
 6,7-dimethoxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolinyl -
 compound 44
 20 octahydroisoindolyl - compound 45
 decahydroisoquinolinyl - compound 46
 2-pyrrolidinonyl - compound 47
 2-piperidonyl - compound 48
 2-azacycloheptanonyl - compound 49
 25 3,4-dihydro-2(1 H)-quinolinonyl - compound 50

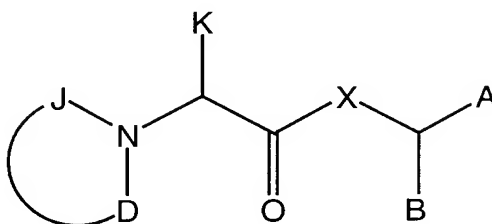
While we have hereinbefore presented a number of embodiments of this invention, it is apparent that our basic construction may be altered

-33-

to provide other embodiments which utilize the products, processes and methods of this invention. Therefore, it will be appreciated that the scope of this invention is to be defined by the appended
5 claims, rather than by the specific embodiments which have been presented by way of example.

CLAIMS

1. A compound having formula (I):



(I)

and pharmaceutically acceptable derivatives thereof,
wherein:

X is O, S, C(R¹)₂ or NR¹;

A, B and R¹ are independently E, (C₁-C₁₀)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₁₀)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C₅-C₇)-cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl; wherein 1 or 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl are optionally and independently replaced with E, (C₅-C₇)-cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl; and wherein 1 to 2 methylene (-CH₂-) groups in said alkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl groups are optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, =N-, -N= or -N(R³)-;

or B and R¹ are independently hydrogen;

wherein R³ is selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₄)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₃-C₄)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, or (C₁-C₄) bridging alkyl, wherein said bridge is formed between the nitrogen atom to which said R³ is bound and any carbon atom of said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl to form a ring, and wherein said ring is optionally benzofused;

wherein E is a saturated, partially saturated or unsaturated, or aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO_3H , trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, $(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkyl, $(\text{C}_2\text{-C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkenyl, $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_6)\text{-straight or branched alkyl}]$, $\text{O}-[(\text{C}_3\text{-C}_6)\text{-straight or branched alkenyl}]$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{-N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{-NH}(\text{R}^4)\text{-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{-N}(\text{R}^4\text{-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z})(\text{R}^5\text{-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z})$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{-Z}$, $\text{O-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z}$, $(\text{CH}_2)_n\text{-O-Z}$, $\text{S-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z}$, CH=CH-Z , 1,2-methylenedioxy, C(O)OH , $\text{C(O)O-}[(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_6)\text{-straight or branched alkyl}]$, $\text{C(O)O-(CH}_2)_n\text{-Z}$ or $\text{C(O)-N}(\text{R}^4)(\text{R}^5)$;

wherein each of R^4 and R^5 are independently hydrogen, $(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_6)$ -straight or branched alkyl, $(\text{C}_3\text{-C}_5)$ -straight or branched alkenyl, or wherein R^4 and R^5 , when bound to the same nitrogen atom, are taken together with the nitrogen atom to form a 5 or 6 membered ring, wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from N, O or S; wherein said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl groups in R_4 and R_5 are optionally substituted with Z.

each n is independently 0 to 4;

each Z is independently selected from a saturated, partially saturated or unsaturated,

monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in Z are optionally and independently replaced with halo, hydroxy, nitro, cyano, C(O)OH, (C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, O-(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl, C(O)O-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], amino, NH[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl], or N-[(C₁-C₃)-straight or branched alkyl]₂;

K is selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, wherein 1 to 2 hydrogen atoms in said alkyl, alkenyl or alkynyl is optionally and independently replaced with E;

wherein K is optionally substituted with up to 3 substituents selected from halogen, OH, O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, O-(CH₂)_n-Z, NO₂, CO₂H, C(O)-O-(C₁-C₆)-alkyl, C(O)NR⁴R⁵, NR⁴R⁵ and (CH₂)_n-Z;

J and D are taken together with the nitrogen atom, form a 5-7 membered saturated or unsaturated heterocyclic ring, wherein up to 3 ring atoms are optionally substituted with a heteroatom selected from O, N, S and S(O₂), wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in said heterocyclic ring are optionally and independently replaced with (C₁-C₆)-straight or branched alkyl, (C₂-C₆)-straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl, oxo, hydroxyl or Z; and wherein any -CH₂- group said heterocyclic ring is optionally and independently replaced by -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O₂)-,

or $-N(R^3)-$; and wherein said heterocyclic ring is optionally fused with E;

wherein R^6 is hydrogen, E, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_3-C_6) -straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl; or wherein R^6 and D are taken together with the atoms to which they are bound to form a 5 to 7 membered ring system wherein said ring optionally contains 1 to 3 additional heteroatoms independently selected from O, S, N, NH, SO, or SO_2 ; and wherein said ring is optionally benzofused.

2. The compound according to claim 1, wherein:

each of A and B is independently selected from $-CH_2-CH_2-E$ or $-CH_2-CH_2-CH_2-E$; and

E is a monocyclic or bicyclic aromatic ring system, wherein said ring comprises 5-7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S, and wherein 1 to 4 ring atoms are independently selected from N, O or S;

wherein 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms in E are optionally and independently replaced with halogen, hydroxyl, hydroxymethyl, nitro, SO_3H , trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, (C_1-C_6) -straight or branched alkyl, (C_2-C_6) -straight or branched alkenyl, $O-[(C_1-C_6)\text{-straight or branched alkyl}]$, $O-[(C_3-C_6)\text{-straight or branched alkenyl}]$, $(CH_2)_n-N(R^4)(R^5)$, $(CH_2)_n-NH(R^4)-(CH_2)_n-Z$, $(CH_2)_n-N(R^4-(CH_2)_n-Z)(R^5-(CH_2)_n-Z)$, $(CH_2)_n-Z$, $O-(CH_2)_n-Z$, $(CH_2)_n-O-Z$, $S-(CH_2)_n-Z$, $CH=CH-Z$, 1,2-methylenedioxy, $C(O)OH$, or $C(O)-N(R^4)(R^5)$.

3. The compound according to claim 1 or 2, wherein D is an aromatic monocyclic or bicyclic ring system, wherein each ring comprises 5 to 7 ring atoms independently selected from C, N, O or S; and wherein no more than 4 ring atoms are selected from N, O or S.

4. The compound according to claim 3, wherein D is substituted phenyl.

5. The compound according to claim 4, wherein G is -C(O)C(O)- .

6. The compound according to claim 4, wherein G is $\text{-SO}_2\text{-}$.

7. The compound according to claim 4, wherein G is -C(O)- .

8. The compound according to claim 4, wherein G is -C(O)Y- .

9. A compound selected from compound nos. 1 and 2.

10. The compound according to claim 2, wherein each of A and B is independently selected from $\text{-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-E}$ or $\text{-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-E}$; and E is pyridyl.

11. A composition comprising a compound

according to claim 1 and a pharmaceutically effective carrier.

12. The composition according to claim 12, further comprising a neurotrophic factor.

13. The composition according to claim 13, wherein said neurotrophic factor is selected from nerve growth factor (NGF), insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1) and its active truncated derivatives such as gIGF-1 and Des(1-3)IGF-I, acidic and basic fibroblast growth factor (aFGF and bFGF, respectively), platelet-derived growth factors (PDGF), brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), ciliary neurotrophic factors (CNTF), glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF), neurotrophin-3 (NT-3) and neurotrophin 4/5 (NT-4/5).

15. The composition according to claim 14, wherein said neurotrophic factor is nerve growth factor (NGF).

16. A method for stimulating neuronal regeneration or preventing neuronal damage or neurodegeneration in a patient or in an ex vivo nerve cell, comprising the step of administering to said patient or said nerve cell a compound according to any one of claims 1-12.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein said compound is administered to a patient and is

formulated together with a pharmaceutically suitable carrier into a pharmaceutically acceptable composition.

18. The method according to claim 17, comprising the additional step of administering to said patient a neurotrophic factor either as part of a multiple dosage form together with said compound or as a separate dosage form.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein said neurotrophic factor is selected from nerve growth factor (NGF), insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1) and its active truncated derivatives such as gIGF-1 and Des(1-3)IGF-I, acidic and basic fibroblast growth factor (aFGF and bFGF, respectively), platelet-derived growth factors (PDGF), brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), ciliary neurotrophic factors (CNTF), glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF), neurotrophin-3 (NT-3) and neurotrophin 4/5 (NT-4/5).

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein said neurotrophic factor is nerve growth factor (NGF).

21. The method according to claim 16, wherein said method is used to treat a patient suffering from a disease selected from trigeminal neuralgia, glossopharyngeal neuralgia, Bell's Palsy, myasthenia gravis, muscular dystrophy, muscle injury,

progressive muscular atrophy, progressive bulbar inherited muscular atrophy, herniated, ruptured, or prolapsed intervertebrae disk syndrome's, cervical spondylosis, plexus disorders, thoracic outlet destruction syndromes, peripheral neuropathies, such as those caused by lead, dapsone, ticks, or porphyria, other peripheral myelin disorders, Alzheimer's disease, Gullain-Barre syndrome, Parkinson's disease and other Parkinsonian disorders, ALS, Tourette's syndrome, multiple sclerosis, other central myelin disorders, stroke and ischemia associated with stroke, neural paropathy, other neural degenerative diseases, motor neuron diseases, sciatic crush, neuropathy associated with diabetes, spinal cord injuries, facial nerve crush and other trauma, chemotherapy- and other medication-induced neuropathies, and Huntington's disease.

22. The method according to claim 16, wherein said method is used to stimulate neuronal regeneration in an *ex vivo* nerve cell.

23. The method according to claim 22, comprising the additional step of contacting said *ex vivo* nerve cell with a neurotrophic factor.

24. The method according to claim 23, wherein said neurotrophic factor is selected from nerve growth factor (NGF), insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1) and its active truncated derivatives such as

gIGF-1 and Des(1-3)IGF-I, acidic and basic fibroblast growth factor (aFGF and bFGF, respectively), platelet-derived growth factors (PDGF), brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), ciliary neurotrophic factors (CNTF), glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF), neurotrophin-3 (NT-3) and neurotrophin 4/5 (NT-4/5).

25. The method according to claim 24, wherein said neurotrophic factor is nerve growth factor (NGF).

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Internat. Application No.
PCT/US 00/18492

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 C07D217/04 C07D401/14 A61K31/4725 A61P25/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 C07D A61K A61P

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 96 41609 A (VERTEX PHARMA) 27 December 1996 (1996-12-27) claims	1-25
A	WO 98 20893 A (VERTEX PHARMA) 22 May 1998 (1998-05-22) claims	1-25
A	WO 98 20892 A (VERTEX PHARMA) 22 May 1998 (1998-05-22) claims	1-25
A	WO 98 20891 A (VERTEX PHARMA) 22 May 1998 (1998-05-22) claims	1-25
	-/--	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- "&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

13 October 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

25/10/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Chouly, J

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 00/18492

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	<p>WO 99 10340 A (VERTEX PHARMA)</p> <p>4 March 1999 (1999-03-04)</p> <p>claims</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p>	1-25

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Internal Application No

PCT/US 00/18492

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
WO 9641609 A	27-12-1996	US 5654332 A	05-08-1997
		AU 6111996 A	09-01-1997
		BR 9609333 A	13-10-1999
		CA 2222430 A	27-12-1996
		CN 1202104 A	16-12-1998
		EP 0831812 A	01-04-1998
		PL 328723 A	15-02-1999
		US 6037370 A	14-03-2000
		US 6124328 A	26-09-2000
		ZA 9604852 A	29-07-1996
WO 9820893 A	22-05-1998	US 5780484 A	14-07-1998
		AU 5439798 A	03-06-1998
		BR 9713037 A	11-04-2000
		CN 1239434 A	22-12-1999
		EP 0941113 A	15-09-1999
		PL 333286 A	22-11-1999
WO 9820892 A	22-05-1998	US 5811434 A	22-09-1998
		AU 5439698 A	03-06-1998
		BR 9712947 A	28-03-2000
		CN 1239435 A	22-12-1999
		EP 0941112 A	15-09-1999
		NZ 335395 A	29-07-1999
		PL 333242 A	22-11-1999
WO 9820891 A	22-05-1998	US 5840736 A	24-11-1998
		AU 5258998 A	03-06-1998
		BG 103429 A	28-04-2000
		BR 9712765 A	26-10-1999
		CN 1239433 A	22-12-1999
		CZ 9901683 A	11-08-1999
		EP 0946190 A	06-10-1999
		NO 992138 A	13-07-1999
		PL 333270 A	22-11-1999
WO 9910340 A	04-03-1999	AU 8923698 A	16-03-1999
		EP 1007521 A	14-06-2000
		NO 20000953 A	02-05-2000
		ZA 9807478 A	22-02-1999